

Porn physically changes the brain. Brains are highly changeable. Use this info to help break free of porn. Porn affects the brain just like drugs, in all major respects.

The brain is your most important sex organ. Neurons, synapses, connected by neurotransmitters - information carriers. Receptors. Lymbic - basic instincts, emotions, drives, survival instincts. Cerebral cortex - awareness, perception, thought. Logic, planning, reflecting, decision making. Neurotransmitter - dopamine - gotta have it molecule. Gas that fuels our desire engine. anticipation and expectation. More intense, more dopamine. Motivation.

Porn can overstimulate your brain. Fundamentally different from prior forms of porn. Wright Brothers plane vs. supersonic jet. Sheer power of stimulation more than brain was designed for. Porn addict's brain reshapes itself to resemble drug or alcohol addict.

Orgasm neurotransmitter rivals strength of heroin. Internet porn overstimulates the brain.

- 1) Brains crave novelty - internet provides endless sexual images, endless novelty - Coolidge effect with rats. vicious cycle
- 2) Provides no limits on the amount we can consume - unlike food and drug addictions.
- 3) Tolerance - need more to get same effect. Increase the amount or escalating the intensity of images. Shock, disgust, or shame weaken over time.
- 4) Available on demand. Forever stash in mind. Image recollection releases dopamine.

These 4 factors create perfect storm - over time, man becomes addicted to his own brain chemistry.

Brain adapts to being overstimulated

Cravings - usually lead to viewing porn. Viewing more porn leads to dopamine. More dopamine leads to more porn.

Reward circuit leading from lymbic to cerebral cortex - normally work in harmony - urges are countered by reason, thought. Porn throws the circuit off balance. Go for it overloads the think about.

Left with 2 options: feeling awful or seeking porn.

Gradual process - desensitization.

Screwtape Letters - an ever increasing craving for an ever decreasing pleasure is the formula. To get the man's soul and give him nothing in return.

MRIs and brain scanners support Lewis's idea.

Porn rewires your brain

Neuropathway for every thought, feeling, behavior in our life. Brain rewires for addiction and new neuropathways are created. Every time viewing or thinking about porn strengthens the connections between cells. Thus, easier for cells to communicate. Neuroplasticity. The more we use a neuropathway, the more our brain changes, making the pathway stronger. Like footpaths in a field of waste high grass. Walking across the field this way required significant effort, but each pass along the path gets easier. Eventually it is a dirt path. The easier the path, the more likely we are to take it. Even when we don't want to. Creating this path of least resistance is called sensitization.

But you can reboot it! Our brains can be rewired from addictive patterns. Restore the sensitivity of your brain cells. But it is difficult.

Map for reboot

Define your objective - worthy end goal - create a timeout so that brain can regain balance. Then long term changes can take place. Beyond rebooting, define what kind of person he wants to become.

Prepare yourself - 90 days of abstinence.

Prepare yourself for cravings - cravings result from overstimulation of your brain.

Be prepared for relapse - a return to porn and masturbation.

Don't walk alone - ask a friend to meet with you on a regular basis for prayer and encouragement. Group or workshop that deals with compulsive or addictive behavior. Source of accountability

Set a start date - Keep a calendar to track days, weeks, and months. Initially big motivator - monitor and celebrate progress. As you rewiring porn and willpower pathways in brain. One weakens as the other strengthens.

Time to rewire varies by person. Abstinence, self-care, and level of addiction.

Pull the trigger - learn to live without by abstaining.

This time you are armed with knowledge of rewiring brain.

Work to maintain your abstinence - Rebooting the brain is the launch point, once you no longer feel compelled to watch porn, you can follow God's path for your life.

How to rewire your brain - porn changes the brain in an undesirable way. Unlearn the addictive patterns; relearn impulse control. The occurs as the addictive, gotta have it, pathways are weakened and the think about it pathways are strengthened.

Practice intentional thinking. What you think about is what you ultimately become. The more attention your brain pays to a given input, the stronger and more elaborately it will be wired and retained in the brain. When we give our attention and focus to good things, like peace, joy, and self-control, our brains rewire in a way that allows us to experience those good things.

Consider Paul's words - Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is noble, right, true, pure, lovely, admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. Phil 4:8 Our neurocircuitry forms itself around whatever we give our focus and attention to. That is why Paul connected our transformation to the renewing of our mind. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Rom 12:2

Pursue alternate passions

We are shaped and fashioned by what we love. This applies to our brains. Porn holds are passions captive and a man forfeits his right/ability to direct his life how he would otherwise choose.

What is life giving to your soul? What relationships have been affected by your use of porn? Enjoyable activities have stopped?

Exercise is the most crucial alternative. Exercise increases dopamine receptors, helping to rewire the brain. Number 1 activity associated with substance abuse recovery. Walk, ride bike, take stairs.

Nature deficit disorder - too much time online - get outside, exercise and enjoy natural beauty. Get out and move - expands your passion and rewires your brain.

Employ the power of repetition - repeated behaviors over time cause structural changes in the brain. Positive changes rewire the brain so that the stimulus of porn and lust is no longer a reflexive reaction. Repetition helps lock behavior in the brain, like muscle memory. Bypass the conscious cognitive step and follow a learned

Notes from Surfing for God, John Michael Cusick
Chapter – Your Brain on Porn

response. Be encouraged - your struggle with porn is a learned response - your brain can unlearn and it can change.